

**INTUITING IGNATIUS IN CORPORATE CULTURE: IGNATIAN VALUES IN THE  
WORKPLACE**

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## **Abstract**

In this exploratory study, I examine Ignatian values to see if they relate to corporate culture.

Using values theory and content analysis methodology I find that (1) among the Jesuit colleges and Universities, there is no consistency in the use of the Ignatian values, (2) the Ignatian values are embedded in those colleges and universities that use them relative to Protestant Universities, and (3) the Ignatian values have some similarity with corporate values.

Globalization and technological changes have not only resulted in socio-economic dislocations in developed and developing economies but also heightened negative deviant behaviors such as xenophobia, discrimination, harassment, and exploitation in corporations (Macedo & Gounari, 2015). Consequently, some practitioners and scholars have called for examination of the standards that orient positive behavior of individuals and employees (i.e., values) particularly in this era of positive organizational scholarship. The values-based leadership literature (Fry, 2003; O'toole, 1996; Russell, 2001) is one response to this quest.

Given the role of Ignatian values in social transformation (Lowney, 2003), I wanted to examine how the Ignatian values relate to companies. Lowney (2003) suggests that “one company – the Jesuits – pioneered a unique formula for molding leaders and in the process built one of history’s most successful companies.” He focused on principles of self-awareness, ingenuity, love, and heroism. Extending that view, I ask: do the Ignatian values manifest in the standards that guide the behavior of employees, and what is their association with corporate values?

This question is important because it establishes a link between those values and corporate activities. Given that corporate values guide organizations, a link between the Ignatian values and the values of organizations may show how the Ignatian values can be adopted in organizations. The study contributes to the Management, Organizations and Spirituality literature which focuses on the link between religious or spiritual entities and corporations.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In the Management and Organization literature, there have been several studies on values in the workplace: - Quinn’s (1988) competing values framework; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone’s

(2004) values framework for spirituality in the workplace; Peterson & Seligman's (2004) virtues in action. A search of the literature did not show the Ignatian Values in the workplace even though there is substantive evidence of the influence of Jesuit education across the world over several centuries. This lack probably provoked the discussion at University of Creighton in 2010 on the question of how to live the Ignatian Values in the workplace. As Jorgensen (2010) observed living the Jesuit values might involve risks. Consequently, it is important to explore first how the Ignatian values relate to the workplace so as to minimize any potential risks. That knowledge can allay fears of uncertainty or confusion with regard to "the 'right' thing to do.

Thus this study is undergirded by the values and virtues theories as they relate to the workplace. There is ample evidence that values shape behavior in the workplace (Cameron & Freeman 1991; Denison & Mishra, 1995; Quinn, 1988; Quinn & Spreitzer, 1991). Peterson & Seligman (2004) also showed that virtues influence cognitions, affect, and behavior of employees. Lastly, Jurkiewicz & Giacalone's (2004) framework suggests that spiritual values can also influence behavior of employees in the workplace.

My purpose in this exploratory study therefore is to attempt to develop the Ignatian Values framework that might be used in the workplace. As an exploratory study, I was interested in a number of research questions. First, I was interested in the universality of the Ignatian Values across all the Jesuit colleges and Universities (AJCUs). The Mission and Identity literature at Xavier shows a number of dimensions. However, it is not clear if the same dimensions apply. So, my first research question was: Do all the ACJUs have the same Ignatian values?

Second, I was interested in how the Ignatian values compare to those of Protestant colleges and universities. Jesuit schools have catholic and Christian origins. As a result, it might

be argued that the values of Protestant colleges would be similar to those of ACJUs. So, my second research question was: How do the Ignatian Values compare with those of Protestant colleges and universities?

Third, I was interested in how the Ignatian values might relate to the workplace. Specifically, I asked, how do Ignatian values relate to tasks at the workplace. Research shows that organizations tend to prefer individuals, either as applicants or employees, who share their values (Bretz, Ash, & Dreher, 1989; Schneider, Smith, & Goldstein, 2000; Schneider, 1987). Further, the attraction-selection-attrition theory (Schneider, Smith, & Goldstein, 2000; Schneider, 1987) posits that managers tend to be attracted to, select, and model individuals who share their values. The relationship between Ignatian values and workplace tasks might therefore have implications for making the world a better place to live.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study is exploratory. As a result, I did not have a priori expectations (hypotheses) on the direction and effects of the relationship. Nevertheless, I used methods often recommended for rigorous scientific research.

### **Sample**

First, I included all 28 AJCUs in the study (see appendix 1). Second, I selected 28 Protestant Colleges and Universities as a comparison group using Christianity as a criterion. My expectation was that the values of AJCUs as catholic institutions will be similar to those of the comparison group. Third, I compared the values of these two groups to those of 50 companies in

Ohio. Lastly, I compared the values of these three groups to a set of representative companies (n = 120) from various states of the US (see Appendix for the characteristics of the samples).

## **Procedure**

I followed a number of steps to obtain and code the data used in this study. First, I downloaded the value or culture statement of each organization from its website. Second, I listed the values specified in the value statement in the code book. Third, to compare the Jesuit values with those of the Protestant values, I used the definitions provided by Xavier for teaching evaluation to create a code book (see appendix 2). Fourth, I used the definitions to code the value statements of companies in Ohio as a way of intuiting Ignatian values in corporations. Lowney (2003) suggests that the Jesuit values have applications in the corporate world.

## **Analytic Technique**

I used content analysis, a popular technique in the social sciences (Berelson, 1952; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Holsti, 1969). According to Krippendorff (1980, p.403), “content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context.” It has been used in all the domains of social sciences. It involves six steps: design, unitizing, sampling, coding, drawing inferences, and validation (see appendix 3). Design focuses on definition of the context or what is desired to be known. In this study, I was interested in knowing Ignatian values and how they might apply in the corporate world. In that regard, it is the linkage between religious and corporate environments. Unitizing centers on definition and identification of the unit of analysis. The units of analysis range from words, to phrases, to sentences, to paragraph, individuals, groups, and organizations (Krippendorff, 2012). I analyzed the values of companies

and Jesuits. Thus, value statements constituted my unit of analysis. I drew representative samples from Protestant universities as a comparison to the Jesuit Colleges and Universities. I also drew samples from companies in Ohio (n = 50) as well as other states of the US (n = 120). The value statements were coded in two ways. First, I did category coding where values were classified as to whether they focused on individuals or groups. Second, I coded the value statements of companies in terms of the degree to which they cohere with Ignatian values. Both forms of coding enabled me to draw inference on how the variable accounts of coded data relate to the values of Jesuits. The validation was done using the sample of company values from the US. Table 1 summarize the process and its application in this study.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

## **RESULTS**

This study is exploratory. As a result, there are no confirmatory results. The purpose of this study was to examine Jesuit values. What I found is that the number of Jesuit values vary across schools. While some had six others had three. In addition, some AJCUs did not have the same terms describing the values. For example, Fordham University's stated values were "strive for excellence in everything you do", "care for others", and "fight for justice". The meanings of these are identical to "reflection", "solidarity and kinship", and "service rooted in justice and love" of Xavier University. Boston College did not explicitly state the Jesuit values but frame the standards as people, service, transparency, innovation, continuous improvement, and collaboration (see Figure 1)

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Do these values relate to those of Protestant universities? The results (Figure 2) suggest that Protestant Universities have values that seem congruent more with service rooted in justice and love followed by reflection and solidarity and kinship. There were fewer values of protestant universities that match discernment, cura personalis, and magis.

I coded the values of small, medium, and large companies (see figure 3). The values were categorized as focusing on self-enhancement, relationships, and transactions. Values that focused on individuals and their growth focused on self-enhancement while those that focused on interpersonal and group relations are relational. Lastly, values that focus on exchanges, social and economic, are transactive standards. The frequency of these value categories is shown in Figure 4.

[Insert figure 3 and 4 about here]

It seems the values of companies relate to Jesuit values. As shown in Figure 5, Self-enhancement values - sincerity, and passion for mission, pride and curiosity and earning trust relate to Jesuit values of *reflection, discernment, and cura personalis*. Relational values - diversity and collaboration, do the right thing, and integrity also seem to link up with Jesuit values of *solidarity and kinship; service rooted in justice, and cura personalis*. Third transactive values – advocacy, customer-focus, safety, social responsibility, ownership, investment in future, and dedication to quality – also relate to *cura personalis and magis*.

[INSERT FIGURE 5ABOUT HERE]

## **DISCUSSION**

The exploratory results suggest four major points of interests. The first point is selectivity. Selectivity refers to some AJCUs focusing on some values but not others. The reasons for the selectivity would have to be explored in future studies through quantitative or



even experimental approaches. One reason might be the nature of the university – research-oriented versus teaching-oriented. The latter are more likely to emphasize more or all of the values than the former. Nevertheless, one major insight seems to be that not all Jesuit colleges and universities have the same standards of reference.

The second point is what I term embeddedness. Compared to the values of the Protestant institutions, those of the Jesuit institutions seem to be emphasized more. For example, the value of *cura personalis* is emphasized by most of the Jesuit institutions. This is due to the fact that the Jesuits are an order, a group of clergy adhering to specific norms as outlined by the founders. Ignatius specified certain norms or standards to be adhered to by all schools run by members of its order (Lowney, 2003). In contrast the Protestant Universities are not under an umbrella origin or founder.

Third, the Jesuit values can be intuited from job descriptions. I term this labor fusion. To the extent that corporations have values similar to those of the Jesuits, it is likely that the ideas of Jesuits can be corporatized (i.e., transferred easily to the corporate setting). The last point is secularization. By that I mean the mapping suggests similarity of Jesuit values to Protestant and secular organizations. Of course, Protestant organizations are religious or Christian. However, to the extent that the Jesuit values are similar to those of secular organizations, it suggests that the religious values can be secularized.

I acknowledge that there are some limitations with this study, the first being that it is exploratory. Second, there was no intercoder reliability. It is because of the exploratory nature of the study. Nevertheless, the approach is consistent with the science. It also seems to have predictive potential.

In sum, this exploratory study shows potentially interesting insights that can be explored in future. That is my next step: empirically examine Ignatian values in corporations. I hope to do so when I get funding for summer research. In the meantime, I shall incorporate the insights in my class to show how Jesuit institutions are distinct with regard to what they value and how that might impact the lives of the students now and after graduation.

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### Appendix 1

	<b>Group 1</b>			<b>Group 2</b>	
1	Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts	Jesuit	29	Ashland University	Protestant
2	Canisius College, Buffalo, New York	Jesuit	30	Dillard University	Protestant
3	College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts	Jesuit	31	Drury University	Protestant
4	Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska	Jesuit	32	Earlham College	Protestant
5	Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut	Jesuit	33	Elmhurst College	Protestant
6	Fordham University, New York City	Jesuit	34	Fisk University	Protestant
7	Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.	Jesuit	35	George Fox University	Protestant
8	Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington	Jesuit	36	Guilford College	Protestant
9	John Carroll University, University Heights, Ohio	Jesuit	37	Heidelberg University	Protestant
10	Le Moyne College, Syracuse, New York	Jesuit	38	Huston-Tillotson University	Protestant
11	Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, California	Jesuit	39	Illinois College	Protestant
12	Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Illinois	Jesuit	40	Juniata College	Protestant
13	Loyola University Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland	Jesuit	41	Lakeland College	Protestant
14	Loyola University New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana	Jesuit	42	Lee University	Protestant
15	Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin	Jesuit	43	LeMoyne-Owen College	Protestant
16	Regis University, Denver, Colorado	Jesuit	44	Manchester University	Protestant
17	Rockhurst University, Kansas City, Missouri	Jesuit	45	McPherson College	Protestant
18	Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Jesuit	46	Moravian College	Protestant
19	Saint Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri	Jesuit	47	Northland College	Protestant
20	Saint Peter's University, Jersey City, New Jersey	Jesuit	48	Pacific University	Protestant
21	Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California	Jesuit	49	Piedmont College	Protestant
22	Seattle University, Seattle, Washington	Jesuit	50	Rocky Mountain College	Protestant
23	Spring Hill College, Mobile, Alabama	Jesuit	51	Salem College	Protestant
24	University of Detroit Mercy, Detroit, Michigan	Jesuit	52	Syracuse University	Protestant
25	University of San Francisco, San Francisco, California	Jesuit	53	University of La Verne	Protestant
26	University of Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania	Jesuit	54	Wake Forest University	Protestant
27	Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling, West Virginia	Jesuit	55	William Penn University	Protestant
28	Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio	Jesuit	56	Wilmington College	Protestant

**Appendix 2**  
Definitions of Jesuit Values (Xavier University)

	<b>Jesuit Values (JV)</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Application to Job Descriptions (Tasks, Duties, &amp; Responsibilities)</b>	<b>JV code</b>
1	<b>Magis</b>	“the more universal good”; to work in a spirit of generous excellence	Extent to which job demands CHALLENGE and EXCELLENCE	CHALL
2	<b>Reflection</b>	to pause and consider the world around us and our place within it	Extent to which job demands KNOWLEDGE and REFLECTION	KNOWL
3	<b>Discernment</b>	to be open to God's spirit as we consider our feelings and rational thought in order to make decisions and take actions that will contribute good to our lives and the world around us	Extent to which job demands RELEVANCE and CONTRIBUTE TO BETTERMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION	RELEV
4	<b>Cura personalis</b>	to view each person as a unique creation of God	Extent to which job demands INTEREST IN THE ORGANIZATION	INTER
5	<b>Solidarity and Kinship</b>	To walk alongside and learn from our companions, both near and far, as we journey through life	Extent to which job demands RESPECT for other members of the organization	RESP
6	<b>Service rooted in justice and Love</b>	to invest our lives into the well-being of our neighbors, particularly those who suffer injustice	Extent to which job demands ETHICAL OR MORAL rectitude	ETHICS

### Appendix 3

#### Content Analysis Procedure: Description and Application

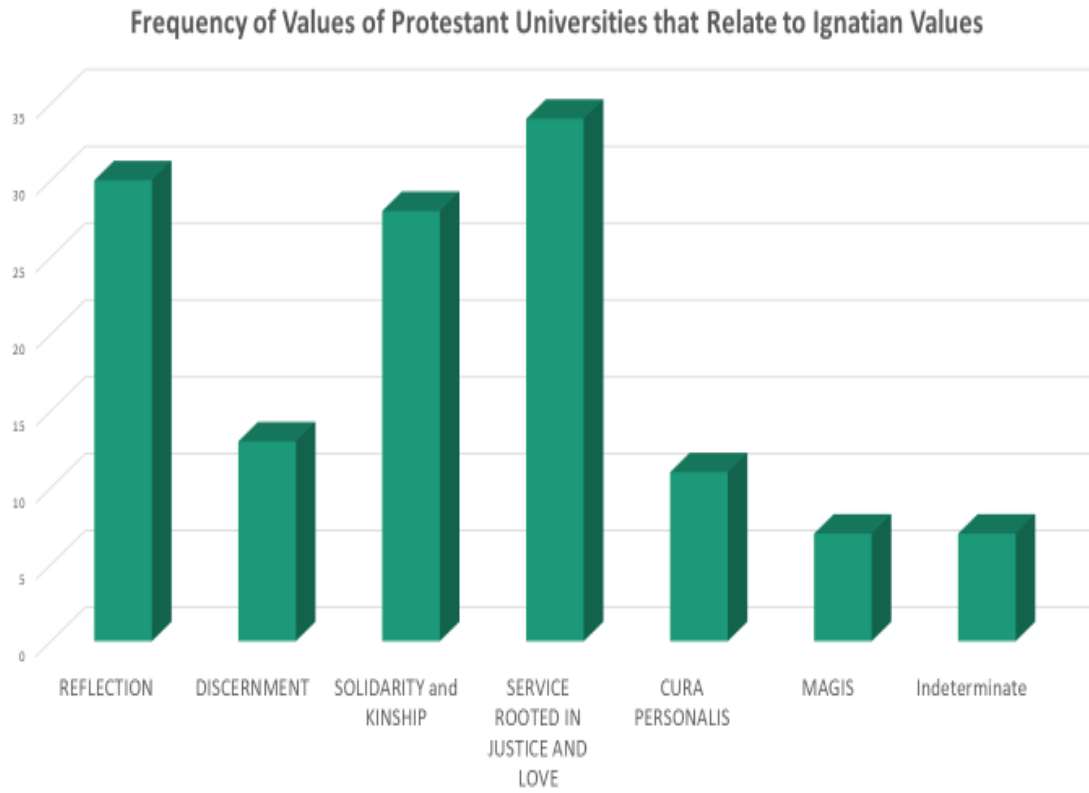
#	Step	Description	Application
1	Design	Defining the context or what is desired to be known	Ignatian values in educational and corporate institutions
2	Unitizing	Defining and identifying the units of analysis	Values in cultural statements
3	Sampling	Drawing representative samples	Educational and corporate institutions
4	Coding	Description of the recoding units or their classification	List of values in statements and categorizing them
5	Inference	who how the variable accounts of coded data re related to the phenomena desired	How they relate to work behaviors - use of job descriptions
6	Validation	Provide validation evidence	Protestant educational institutions and corporations in US

**Figure 1**

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts	Canisius College, Buffalo, New York	College of the Holy Cross, Worcester	Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska	Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut	Fordham University, New York City
					Strive for excellence in everything you do.
Collaboration	Cura personalis	Integrity	Magis	Uniqueness	
Continuous improvement	care for the whole person	teamwork	women and men for and with others	respect	Care for others
innovation	social justice	innovation	Cura personalis	academic freedom	Fight for justice
people	Magis	commitment	unity of heart, mind, & soul	Community.	
service	excellence	stewardship	Ad majorem dei gloriam	collaboration	
transparency	Principled leadership		forming & educating agents of change	commitment	
	personal accountability			concern for others	
	responsibility for social justice				
	respect for the natural world				
	Responsible stewardship				

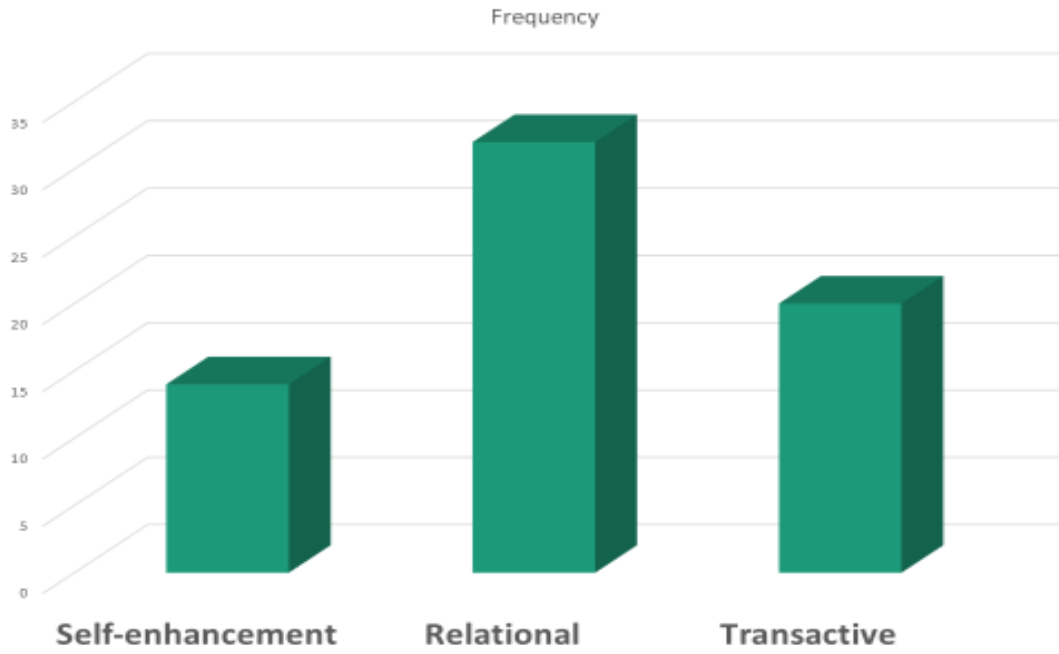


**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**

Categories of Company Values



**Figure 4**

Number of Values by Size of Company

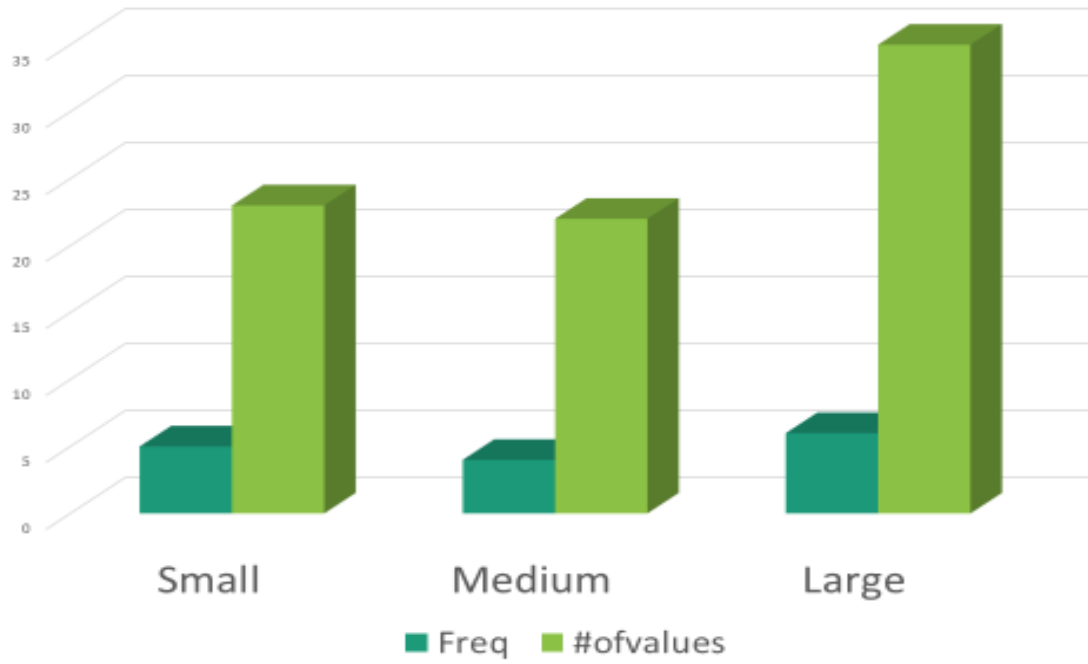


Figure 5

Correspondence of Company Values and Ignatian Values

